

**Remarks
Ambassador James Zumwalt**

Road Opening Ceremony

**10:30, Thursday, April 23, 2015
Boutoupa, Camaracounda**

(As prepared)

Dear Governor Ibrahima Sakho,
Prefect Said Dia,
Special Advisor to the President Benoît Sambou,
Mayor of Boutoupa, Camaracoundais, Malang Gassama,
Shelter for Life Country Director Jim Dean.

Good morning. I am pleased to join you to dedicate this reconstructed road. I would like to thank you for coming to this ceremony.

I would first like to recognize those of you who moved the many tons of earth to clear the land for this important project.

I hope that the communities along this road, those who tend the fields, harvest the crops, and bring the harvest to the market here in Camaracounda will benefit from this new road. This project represents a tangible outcome of the partnership between the United States and Senegal. The U.S. Department of Agriculture funded this project to help the *Casamançais* become more productive. This project will increase your opportunities to buy and sell rice, maize and other products in the local markets.

The United States Government funded this project because we support the Government of Senegal's efforts to foster a balanced and sustainable socio-economic recovery in Casamance. This road links Camaracounda to Agnak. As reconstruction of the RN6 proceeds, it will be much easier to transport farm products even further -- to Ziguinchor and Kolda. We hope these new linkages will improve opportunities for everyone in the region and improve linkages with Senegal's national economy.

In rebuilding this road and your communities, you are also building peace in the Casamance. Your hard work, dedication, and commitment to a peaceful future for the Casamance is inspiring. Achieving peace also means reducing the risks from land mines that have caused entire villages to be abandoned. The United States is looking for ways to help the Government of Senegal tackle this difficult problem.

Some of you may have been present at a similar event last August, in Laly. Shelter for Life supported reconstruction of another road there. My deputy, Sandra Clark, dedicated that road. She wanted to come here this time as well, but I told her it was my turn to visit the Casamance. If the rest of the Casamance is as beautiful as Camaracounda, I think the next time will also be my turn.

Thank you every one for coming. I plan to travel frequently to the Casamance to see for myself the progress that you are making in developing this productive and beautiful region.